

38 COMMENTARY ON MACAULAY'S
HISTORY

without seeming to become an advocate
instead of a his-
torian. The device was what he termed the '
 declamatory
disquisition ', namely, a summary of the
arguments on one
side or the other, or on both sides, cast into
the form of a
speech. He says in his journal : ' The
declamatory dis-
quisition which I have substituted for the
orations of the
ancient historians, seems to me likely to
answer. It is a
sort of composition which suits my style, and
will probably
take with the public/ ¹

There is a good instance in the first chapter
of the His-
tory, when Macaulay describes the state of
public feeling
in 1642.

Neither party wanted strong arguments for
the course
which it was disposed to take. The reasonings
of the most
enlightened Royalists may be summed up thus
:—It is true
that great abuses have existed ; but they have
been re-
dressed. It is true that precious rights have
been invaded ;
but they have been vindicated and
surrounded with new
securities. The sittings of the Estates of the
realm have
been, in defiance of all precedent and of the
spirit of the
constitution, intermitted during eleven
years ; but it has
now been provided that henceforth three
years shall never
elapse without a Parliament. The Star
Chamber, the
High Commission, the Council of York,
oppressed and
plundered us ; but those hateful courts have
now ceased
to exist. The Lord Lieutenant aimed at
establishing

military despotism ; but he has answered for
his treason
with his head. The Primate tainted our
worship with
Popish rites, and punished our scruples
with Popish
cruelty; but he is awaiting in the Tower the
judgment of
his peers. The Lord Keeper sanctioned a plan
by which the
property of every man in England was placed
at the mercy
of the Crown ; but he has been disgraced,
ruined, and
compelled to take refuge in a foreign land.
The ministers

¹ Journal, Dec. 10, 1850. Trevelyan, ii. 288.